

REMARKS

The Office Action dated August 20, 2007, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claim 1-47 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1, 18-20, 35, and 46-47 are independent claims. Claims 1-4, 6-16, 18-20, 22, 27-33, 35, 44, and 46-47 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-47 are respectfully submitted for consideration.

Claim 31 was indicated as containing allowable subject matter, but was objected to because of its dependency from rejected base claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter. It is respectfully submitted that each of the claims from which claim 31 depends is also allowable, as explained below, and consequently it is respectfully requested that the objection to claim 31 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 18-20, and 46 were objected to because the feature of "receiving, at the network element, network access information relating to said user equipment," does not specify from where the information is received. The Office Action stated that "Appropriate correction is required." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The claims are not incorrect as they stand. Although failing to specify the source of the information makes the claims broader than specifying the source of the information, broad claims are not improper. Thus, no "correction" is required in order to satisfy the formal requirements of the USPTO, and the objection should be withdrawn

whether or not the source of information is specified. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this objection be so withdrawn.

As will be discussed below, the present inventors have provided, among other things, a new and non-obvious way to ensure that network access for an emergency call is maintained throughout the duration of the emergency call. As such, the present inventors have recognized that certain information may be received at a controlling network entity, during the call, which would conventionally result in the emergency call being dropped. Certain embodiments of the present invention overcome this problem by receiving, at the controlling entity, such information and disabling selective access control based on this information for the emergency call. It is not particularly essential to achieve such benefits that such information originate from a particular element. Accordingly, it is unclear why the objection was raised, and it is respectfully submitted that it is unclear how "correction" would properly be applied. Thus, for this additional reason, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 10-16, 18-22, 25-26, 29-30, 32-33, 35-36, 42, and 46-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,230,017 of Andersson et al. ("Andersson"). Applicants respectfully submit that the claims recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited art.

Claim 1, upon which claims 2-17 depend, is directed to a method including receiving an emergency call network access from a user equipment. The method also includes receiving network access information relating to the user equipment, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access.

The method further includes identifying that the request is for an emergency call. The method additionally includes disabling selective access to the network in dependence on the network access information responsive to the identifying.

Claim 18 is directed to a computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium including computer program code, the computer program code configured to perform a method. The method includes receiving an emergency call network access from a user equipment. The method also includes receiving network access information relating to the user equipment, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The method further includes identifying the request is for an emergency call. The method additionally includes disabling selective access to the network in dependence on the network access information responsive to the identifying.

Claim 19 is directed to a computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for supporting emergency calls in a mobile communications network. The computer program product is configured when executed on a computer to perform receiving an emergency call network access from a user equipment. The computer program product is also configured when executed on a computer to perform receiving network access information relating to the user equipment, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The computer program product is further configured when executed on a computer to perform identifying the request is for an emergency call. The computer program product is additionally configured when executed on a computer

to perform disabling selective access to the network in dependence on the network access information responsive to the identifying.

Claim 20, upon which claims 21-34 depend, is directed to a network element including a network access request receiving unit configured to receive a network access request from a user equipment in a network. The network element also includes a network access information receiving unit configured to receive network access information relating to the user equipment, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The network element further includes an access control unit configured to selectively control network access for the user equipment in dependence on the network access information. The network element additionally includes a disabling unit configured to disable the access control unit for an emergency call network access.

Claim 35, upon which claims 35-45 depend, is directed to a communication system including an access network and a core network. The communication system further includes at least one user equipment configured to connect to the core network through the access network. The access network is configured to receive a request for an emergency call network access from the user equipment. The access network is also configured to receive network access information relating to the user from the core network, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The access network is further configured to identify the request is for an emergency call. The access network is additionally configured to disable selective

controlling of access to the network in dependence on the network access information responsive to identification of the emergency call.

Claim 46 is directed to a network element including network access request receiving means for receiving a network access request from a user equipment in a network. The network element also includes network access information receiving means for receiving network access information relating to the user equipment, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The network element further includes selection means for selectively controlling network access for the user equipment in dependence on the network access information. The network element additionally includes disabling means for disabling the selection means for an emergency call network access.

Claim 47 is directed to a communication system including an access network and a core network. The system also includes at least one user equipment for connection to the core network through the access network. The access network includes means for receiving a request for a network access from the user equipment. The access network further includes means for receiving network access information relating to the user from the core network, the network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access. The access network additionally includes means for selectively controlling access to the core network for the user equipment in dependence on the network access information. The access network also includes means for identifying a request for an emergency call. The access network further includes means for disabling

the means for selectively controlling access to the network responsive to identification of the emergency call.

Applicants respectfully submit that Andersson fails to disclose or suggest all of the elements of any of the presently pending claims, and consequently provide certain critical and unobvious advantages, as will be discussed below.

Andersson generally relates to geographical restriction in a cellular telecommunications network. More particularly, Andersson discusses a system in which a mobile station's access can be selectively controlled. For example, Andersson mentions that a mobile station can be afforded a first tariff in certain cells and a second tariff in alternative cells.

As can be seen from Figure 2a of Andersson, and the corresponding description at column 5 thereof, Andersson the home location register is shown as "including records for a plurality of mobile subscribers, including a record 100(a) for the mobile subscriber (mobile subscriber "N")" (as can be seen at column 5, lines 16-19). This record contains an "allowed cells list field 112," as discussed at column 5, lines 56-57.

As can be seen from Figure 3 of Andersson, and the corresponding description at column 9, like 65, to column 10, line 3, the process by which an emergency call is handled is explicitly set forth. In particular, Andersson indicates that "if an emergency service has been dialed, mobile switching center 30 completes the call without reference to any geographical restrictions" (emphasis added). This step precedes any reception of the above-mentioned record that was stored in the HLR. Subsequently, Andersson

describes that "assuming that no emergency or other toll-free number is called, at step 3-2 mobile switching center 30 fetches the subscription record" (emphasis added).

Thus, it is should be apparent that Andersson discusses two scenarios: (1) when there is no emergency call the subscription record is retrieved and used in the normal manner, and (2) when there is an emergency call the call is allowed to continue, without any subscription record being received.

In contrast, the presently pending claims recite (among other things), "receiving an emergency call network access from a user equipment" (emphasis added) and also "receiving network access information relating to said user equipment, said network access information indicating the areas the user equipment is allowed to access." For ease of illustration, this network access information can be considered to be comparable to the subscription record and yet this receiving network access information is received (as claimed) even when an emergency call is made.

The present inventors have recognized that, in the conventional art (such as Andersson and others cited already in the record) an emergency call will result in a call being connected without network access information being retrieved. This disadvantageously may lead to an emergency call being dropped should the network access information subsequently be received at the network element. This may occur should, for example, a further connection with the mobile station be initiated (for example, if the mobile station attempts data access to receive a text message).

Certain embodiments of the present invention overcome the above disadvantages by specifically receiving network access information at the network element and

disabling the selective access for an emergency call. Consequently, should another connection be initiated, there is no possibility that the network access information would be inadvertently received at the controller (since the network access information is already present at the controller) and also prevents an analysis of the network access information from resulting in the emergency call being dropped, since the selective access is disabled.

Thus, it can be seen that certain embodiments of the present invention, incorporating the features discussed above that clearly distinguish the claims of the present invention from Andersson, provide critical and unobvious advantages over Andersson (and the other references of record). Moreover, it is clear that Andersson explicitly teaches away from the features of the presently pending claims, because Andersson's first step in an emergency call is to allow the call without receiving any network access information. This is clearly contrary to what is claimed, and consequently renders the claims both novel and non-obvious with respect to Andersson.

While the discussion above focused on the features of the claims as recited in independent claim 1, the other independent claims (which each have their own respective scope) also recite similar features. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of each of claims 1, 18-20, 35, and 46-47 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-3, 6-8, 10-16, 21-22, 25-26, 29-30, 32-33, 36, and 42 depend respectively from, and further limit, claims 1, 20, and 35. Thus, each of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10-16, 21-22, 25-26, 29-30, 32-33, 36, and 42 recites subject matter that is neither

disclosed nor suggested in Andersson. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10-16, 21-22, 25-26, 29-30, 32-33, 36, and 42 be withdrawn.

It should be noted that there is no "emergency call only" feature in claim 20, as presently pending. Claim 20, however, recites "a disabling unit configured to disable the access control unit for an emergency call network access." For the reasons discussed above, Andersson fails to disclose or suggest any such feature, and tends to teach away from such a feature. Accordingly, although claim 20 does not contain an "emergency call only" limitation, the rejection of claim 20 should be similarly withdrawn.

Claims 4-5, 9, 23-24, 27-28, 34, and 37-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindgren in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,775,534 of Lindgren et al. ("Lindgren"). Claims 17 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Andersson alone. Claims 43-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Andersson in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,201,973 of Kowaguchi ("Kowaguchi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,492 of Choi ("Choi"). Applicants respectfully traverse each of these rejections.

Claims 4-5, 9, 17, 23-24, 27-28, 34, 37-41, and 43-45 depend respectively from, and further limit, claims 1, 20, and 35. At least some of the deficiencies of Andersson with respect to claims 1, 20, and 35 are discussed above. None of the other cited references (alone or in combination with one another and/or Andersson) remedies the above-identified deficiencies of Andersson, whether or not they disclose that for which they were cited.

Additionally, as noted above, Andersson fairly explicitly teaches away from the presently claimed invention, because Andersson bypasses the step of obtaining the subscription profile when an emergency call is made. Andersson's reason for doing so is that the geographical restrictions on access should not be applied to emergency calls. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art considering Andersson would find no reason to ignore Andersson's explicit teaching.

Furthermore, as noted above, certain embodiments of the present invention provide critical and unobvious advantages over the prior art, by providing for stable emergency calls especially in the event that for some reason network access information is received by a network access controlling device during the call.

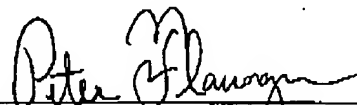
None of the cited references comes close to disclosing information that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the presently claimed invention. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that the rejections of claims 4-5, 9, 17, 23-24, 27-28, 34, 37-41, and 43-45 be withdrawn.

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-45 recites subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited art. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that all of claims 1-45 be allowed, and that this application be passed to issuance.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, Applicants' undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,



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